THE CASE OF COUNT O'ROURKE,

PRESENTED TO His MAJESTY,

IN JUNE, 1784.

By His EXCELLENCY the *Marquis* of CARMARTHEN, MINISTER and SECRETARY of STATE.

LONDON: Printed in the YEAR 1784.

1608/5074.

BRITISH MUSEUM
15 MAY 70

To the KINGS moſt

EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF

JOHN Count O'ROURKE,

MOST HUMBLY

SHEWETH,

THAT from the annexed authentic accounts, faithfully extracted from your Majeſty's archives in England and Ireland, it appears, that the family of O'Rourke, one of the moſt ancient and noble in Ireland, of which your Majeſty's Petitioner has the honor to be now the chief, were deprived by the uſurper Oliver Cromwell of fifty-ſeven thouſand and two hundred acres of land, or thereabouts, which are the whole county of Leitrim, in Ireland. It likewiſe appears by your Majeſty's Royal Signet of the Third of December, 1783, that no proofs can be authentic, but what are duly atteſted from your Majeſty's college of Heraldry; which proofs your Petitioner moſt humbly begs leave to join to this memorial.

THAT

THAT there is not any attainder againſt your Petitioner, or any of the titles that belonged to his family.

THAT your Petitioner's Grand-father had often preſented memorials to the then Government of Ireland, repreſenting the unlawful manner in which he was deprived by Oliver Cromwell of his lands and territories.

THAT after the deceaſe of your Petitioner's Grand-father, his Son, your Petitioner's Father, renewed the ſame claims, but without effect; and your Petitioner's family being prevented, by the ſeverity of the laws againſt Catholics, from proſecuting their claims, and finding all remonſtrances ineffectual, were at length obliged to ſubmit in ſilence; but your Petitioner preſumes to hope, that this enlightened age, in which we have the happineſs to live under your Majeſty's auſpicious Government, will at length abate the ſpirit of tyranny and oppreſſion which the policy of former times introduced, againſt the ancient and noble families of Ireland, and particularly your Petitioner's houſe, which abſolutely in the earlieſt period of hiſtory enjoyed the principallity of Breffny, in Ireland, independent, and now can with truth aver, that there are no outſtanding attainders againſt any of their deſcendents, a circumſtance rare and ſtriking, conſidering

conſidering the general confuſion in which the families of Ireland have been involved.

THAT your Petitioner's Grand-father, finding that the tyranny intended againſt him was rigorous and unrelenting, quitted his native land, to ſeek in foreign ſtates that tranquillity which he was not ſuffered to enjoy at home; but each time his lady was ready to lie-in, he ſent her for that purpoſe to Ireland, that her children might be born natives of the country, being always in expectation, that ſooner or later, Government would feel the injuſtice exerciſed, moſt unlawfully and ungenerouſly, againſt their family, and allow them at leaſt ſome compenſation for their injured rights.

THAT your Petitioner not being able to obtain advancement in your Majeſty's army, on account of his religion, and being educated to arms, was forced into foreign ſervice, where he flatters himſelf to have ſerved thirty years with reputation and honor.

THAT your Petitioner in the beginning of the late American troubles, returned to his native country, to offer his ſervice to your Majeſty, and with intent to raiſe four thouſand men in Ireland for your Majeſty's ſervice, had the plan propoſed been approved of.

THAT

THAT your Petitioner has in every act of his life conducted himſelf in a manner, which he preſumes to hope may in ſome degree recommend him to your Majeſty's favor and protection; and he flatters himſelf, that Earl Temple, late Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, will report favorably of him to your Majeſty.

YOUR petitioner therefore moſt humbly prays your Majeſty, to take the circumſtances of his hard caſe into your Royal conſideration, and that your Majeſty would be graciouſly pleaſed to grant him, in conſideration of the loſſes and cruel ſufferings of his family, ſuch mark of your Royal munificence, as may enable him to ſupport, in ſome degree, the honor of his birth and the dignity of his family.

AND your Majeſty's Petitioner as in duty bound will ever PRAY.

THE

THE following is a ſhort account of the houſe of O'Rourke, and its territorial poſſeſſions, extracted from the Iriſh annals in general, and particularly from the more detailed relations of the O'Cornins, hereditary antiquarians and genealogiſts to the O'Rourkes.

AFTER the reception of chriſtianity in the fifth century, the province of Connaught was laid out in three diviſions among the principal families of Hy-Brune-ai, Hy-Brune-Breffny, and Hy-Fiacre. Each family governed in its own diviſions, and each had occaſionally a right to be elected to the government of the whole province. The family of O'Rourke poſſeſſed the territory now called the county of Leitrim, and the ſurname O'Rourke, was firſt taken by Fergall (called Sen Fergall) or Fergall the fortunate, in memory of Ruark, his celebrated grand-father. That Sen Fergall, from being governor of Breffny, in the tenth century, was elected ſovereign of the whole province of Connaught, and died in battle, in the year 964. It was on taking this ſurname of O'Rourke, that new regulations were made in the civil eſtabliſhment of the family, and particularly the

the appointment of the tribe of Mac Murray to be thenceforward the hereditary cavalry of the O'Rourkes, of this race of Sen Fergall was Tiarnan O'Rourke, King and Lord of Breffny thirty-five years, and was killed in the reign of Henry the II.

From Sen Fergall (in the twelfth generation) deſcended Ulgarg, Prince of Breffny in the fourteenth century. This Ulgarg left two ſons, Tiarnan-more, and Teige na Geer; and on the election of the former to the government of Breffny on his father's demiſe, the territories of Kinel Lochan and Culolin, were ceded to his brother Teige na Geer; which territories remained in the poſſeſſion of the latter and his poſterity, without diminution or alienation, down to the forfeiture of the northern counties.

In the preſent general account, it is proper to be noted that Ulgarg above-mentioned, was the common anceſtor of all who now remain of the O'Rourke's name; and conſequently that any perſon who cannot trace his pedigree up lineally to the ſaid Ulgarg cannot be conſidered as one of that houſe.

The genealogy of John Count O'Rourke from Teige na Geer, is as foliows;

Tiege

Teige na Geer—Arthur—Hugh—Donall—Lochlin—Shane—Shane og—Owen—Shane og—Brian—Owen—John.

Fron Tiarnan-mor, ſon of Ulgarg (Teige na Geer's brother) deſcended the families of Drumahier and Carrha, and in the fourth generation from the ſaid Tiarnan, deſcended Brian Ballach more, elected prince, chief governor of Breffny, 1529; who died with a celebrated character, in 1562, leaving two ſons, who had iſſue Brian na Martha, who warred againſt Queen Elizabeth, and Tiarnan, from whom Count John O'Rourke is deſcended in the maternal line, as will be ſhewn hereafter.

Count Owen O Rourke, the ſon of Con og O'Rourke and of Dorothy, the daughter of O'Connor Sligo, was chief of the family of Carrha. That nobleman followed the fortune of the late King James the II. and was ſoon diſtinguiſhed in France by his great abilities, and by the merit he had with the ſeveral princes in whoſe ſervice he was employed. He married Catharine Diana de Beauveau, ſiſter to the Prince of Croan, but left no iſſue.—He ſerved with great reputation in Lorraine, under the then reigning duke, grand-father to the preſent Emperor of Germany. His grand-nephew, James O'Rourke, lives at Drumarſna, in the county of Leitrim

Andrew

Andrew O'Rourke of Creevy Eſq. another kinſman of John Count O'Rourke, died in February, 1782. He was married to Mary, the daughter of Francis Conmee of Mountown, Eſq. and of Elizabeth Nugent, ſiſter to the late John Nugent, of Caſtle Nugent, Eſq. The ſaid Andrew left ſeveral ſons by that marriage, now living in good repute. We now deſcend to a more particular account.

John Count O'Rourke, was born in 1735, in the pariſh of Oghteragh, in Breffny, where his anceſtors governed as ſovereigns for many centuries. In his early youth he quitted Ireland. and was appointed captain of the Royal Scotch, in the ſervice of France. Soon after, by permiſſion from his moſt Chriſtian Majeſty, he entered into the ſervice of the Empreſs of Ruſſia, who upon his arrival made him a major of horſe, and ſoon after appointed him firſt major of her regiment of horſe guards Curraſſiers,

On the concluſion of the war he returned to France; his moſt Chriſtian Majeſty made him a colonel of horſe, and in conſideration of his extraction, granted to him and his heirs for ever, all the honors and dignities due to the high nobility of France, and the ſame was confirmed by letters-patent, regiſtered in parliament

ment, 1771, and in the Chambre des Comptes. He was alſo made a knight of the royal order of St Louis, and was honored with the poſt of Chamberlain to Staniſlaus, the late King of Poland and Duke of Lorraine, father-in-law to Louis the fifteenth, 1763.

The Count O'Rourke's father, Owen, was married to Mary O'Berne, the daughter of Brian O'Berne and Jane Mac Dermott of the Rock. Of that marriage the only living iſſue are John the preſent Count, and Con, at preſent a colonel of carbineers in the Ruſſian ſervice, who married Miſs Stuart, niece to the preſent Field-Marſhal Count de Lacy, and niece alſo to Count Browne, Governor-General of Livonia, and Riga.

The family of O'Berne were hereditary Lords of the country of Tir-Brune, which ſtretches along the river Shannon, from Mac Dermott's country to that of the Mac Branan's, in the county of Roſcommon; and Henry O'Berne, the couſin-german of the ſaid Brian O'Berne, was the father of the late Ducheſs of Warton.

Brian the Count's grand-father, was married to Bridget O'Rourke, the daughter of Owen-og O'Rourke, and of Owna (commonly called Winifred O'Cahan, in the county of Derry.

Beſides

Beſides his ſon, Owen the Count's father, he had alſo a ſiſter, Owna, married to Philip Roche, of the noble family of Fermoy, and near kinſman to the late Lord Fermoy, much eſteemed abroad.

Martin Browne, of Clanfadd, in the county of Roſcommon, Eſq. and chief of the Brownes of Galway, is the only ſon of William Browne, Eſq. who died in 1735, and was by his mother Mary O'Berne, couſin-german to Count O' Rourke's mother.

Bridget O'Rourke, the Count's grand-mother, was as before obſerved, the daughter of Owen-og, who was the ſon of Owen-mor, who was the ſon of Tiarnan, who was the ſon of Brian Ballach more, who governed over Breffny, 1562, as above related. That Tiarnan was the brother of Brian na Murtha, who warred againſt Queen Elizabeth, in 1589.

The Count O'Rourke's paternal great grandfather Shane og, was married to Owna O'Rourke, the daughter of Brian O'Rourke of the houſe of Drumahere.

Cromwell coming to Ireland gave the laſt fatal ſtroke to the O'Rourkes

Owen O'Rourke, the father of the ſaid Shane og, was married to Margaret Nugent, of the family

family of the Earls of Weſtmeath, originally Lords of Delvin: and Con O'Rourke, couſin-german to the ſaid Owen, was married to Eleanor Nugent, ſiſter to Robert Nugent of the ſame family.—Count O'Rourke's paternal anceſtors allied frequently with the Nugents of Carlanſtown, and the Nugents of Dyſart and Culombre.

To recite all the matrimonial alliances of the Counts anceſtors with the principal Iriſh and Engliſh Nobility, the O'Conors, the O'Neils, the O'Brians, the O'Reillys, and the Bourkes, the Earls of Clanricarde, and the Mac Guires of Tempoe, would exceed the bounds generally preſcribed to genealogical pedigrees.

Count O'Rourke is nearly related to O'Donnell of Larkfield, in the county of Leitrim, who deſcended in the direct Line from Rory created Earl of Tyrconnell by King James the I. The ſaid O'Donnell was Father to the late Count O'Donnell, General and Commander in Chief of all the Horſe in the Auſtrian Imperial ſervice.

The Family of O'Rourke entered into matrimonial alliances with ſome noble families of Engliſh birth, by ſuch alliances the Count John O'Rourke is related to the Irby family, the chief of which is the preſent Lord Boſton.

Margaret

Margaret O'Rourke, the mother of the late General Paget, whose Grandson is the present Lord Paget, was the Count O'Rourke's near kinswoman. The Count is also a relation to Field-Marshal Lacy, and also to General Count Lacy, in Spain. He is likewise related to John Dillon, Earl of Roscommon, who died in September, 1782. at Knockranny in the county of Roscommon.

All the afore-mentioned facts clearly prove that the loss of the Breffny territories, doth not in the least affect the birth or dignity of the Count O'Rourke's House.

COPY.

TO All and Singular to whom these Presents shall come, I William Bryan Esq. Deputy Ulster King of Arms, of all Ireland, by virtue of the Power and Authority to me granted, by William Hawkins Esq. Ulster King of Arms, and principal Herald of all Ireland, send greeting, Know ye therefore that I the said

ſaid William Bryan, do hereby Certify that the above Genealogical Account, of John Count O'Rourke, of the County of Leitrim, in the Kingdom of Ireland is true, In witneſs whereof I have hereunto ſubſcribed My Name and Title, and affixed the Seal of my Office at Dublin, the Twenty Firſt, day of October, 1782.

William Bryan, Deputy Ulſter King of Arms of all Ireland.

By the Lord-Lieutenant, General and General-Governor of His Majeſty's Kingdom of Ireland.

Sign'd,

NUGENT TEMPLE.

Seal'd at the Caſtle of Dublin.

At the humble Requeſt of William Bryan Eſq. Subſcriber of the within Geneology, We do hereby Certify, and Declare that the ſaid William Bryan is the Deputy, approved by the Government of this Kingdom, to William Hawkins Eſq. Ulſter King of Arms, and principal

principal Herald of all Ireland, who by the Authority of his ſaid Office, is the proper Officer for keeping the Records of Arms, and Genealogies of the Nobility and Gentry of this Kingdom, and for Certifying the ſame. Given under Our Hand and Seal of Arms, at His Majeſty's Caſtle of Dublin, the Twenty-fourth day of October, One Thouſand Seven Hundred and Eighty Two.

Entered By His Excellency's Command,

Signed W. W. GRENVILLE.

COPY

To All to whom theſe Preſents ſhall come, We the Kings Heralds and Purſuivants, of the College of arms, London, having been deſired by John Count O'Rourke to make ſearch in the Records and Regiſters of our Office, for the Family of O'Rourke, do hereby Certify that it appears from an ancient Manuſcript, now remaining in our ſaid College, intitled *Familiæ Hiberniæ Illuſtriores*, that the Country called Breny O'Rourke, or O'Rourke's Country, now the County of Leitrim, in Ireland, was gtanted by King John to Walter de Lacy and his Heirs, who planted it with Engliſhmen, and built many Caſtles in it, but afterwards they were expulſed by O'Rourke &c.

That

That the County of Leitrim or O'Rourke's Country, containd 1430, Cartrons of Land, every Cartron 40 Acres, Sum total of Acres, 57,200.

That Teige O'Rourke, Son of Bryan ne Murchy O'Rourke, Chief and Lord of the Country, after the Death of his Father, was attainted of Treaſon by Queen Elizabeth, but afterwards reſtored by her ſucceſſor King James, in the firſt Year of his Reign, from whom he took his Lands by Letters-Patent to him and the Heirs Male of his Body lawfully begotten; and that Brian, Son of the ſaid Teige, was found to be the King's Ward.

And we do alſo at the Requeſt of the ſaid Count O'Rourke, further certify that by Letters of Naturalization duly recorded in our ſaid College, it appears that his moſt Chriſtian Majeſty, Louis the fifteenth, in Conſideration of the diſtinguiſhed Services of the ſaid Count, and of the Houſe of O'Rourke had been pleaſed, not only to admit the ſaid Count, to all the Rights of a natural born Subject of France, with the Honors, Privileges and Rank due to his high Birth, but had alſo granted like Letters of Naturalization, to a younger Branch of the ſaid Count's Family, with all the Honors, Prerogatives, and Privileges, of the ancient Nobleſſe of France.

In

In Witneſs whereof, we have hereunto affixed the common Seal of our Corporation, this 12ſt. day of June, in the Twenty third Year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third, by the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. And in the Year of our Lord One Thouſand Seven Hundred and Eighty Three. Ralph Bigland, Garter, principal King of Arms and Regiſter.

L. S.

FINIS.